



Research and Reference Service

OVERSEAS REACTION TO THE CUBAN SITUATION
(As of 8 a.m., November 7, 1962)

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SUMMARY

Even the Cubans are relatively quiet about the crisis as comment drops off throughout much of the world.

There has been little change in the Havana propaganda output in the past few days. For the first time, Cuban attention has turned to other subjects. Havana still claims wide support abroad for Castro's five demands, including Guantanamo. The Soviet Ambassador spoke at an October Revolution celebration last night in Havana, and gave general backing to Castro's position.

Support of the U.S. continues in the Hemisphere with further calls to eliminate the Castro regime. Excelsior of Mexico City praises the Free World for its "strong and decided attitude."

The Soviet elite have made a series of statements in the last few days which seem to reflect their growing concern about worldwide implications of a Moscow policy defeat in Cuba. All these statements stay on the "peaceful coexistence" line.

In the non-Arab Near East and South Asia the strength of the Western world in the crisis is being compared to the discord within the Communist bloc. The UAR gave wide play to Nasser's letter to Khrushchev, praising the Soviet leader for his "sincere desire for peace."

Far East news coverage and comment continues to dwindle with Castro's role and his future status still drawing some attention in Thailand and the Philippines. Typical Japanese assessment is still criticizing both the U.S. and the USSR.

African editorial interest has declined with strong pro-U.S. positions appearing only in the European controlled press.

During the continued diplomatic interlude, Western European attention to Cuba declines. Speculative assessment of the possible actions of both Khrushchev and Castro took over the limited comment. Italian press commentators said there would be a Cuban problem as long as Castro remains in power, while France and Germany anticipated a Soviet counter-move in Berlin or in the U.N.

LATIN AMERICA

Broad support of the U.S. continues in the Hemisphere as news coverage declines. There are further calls to eliminate the "Castro regime [which is a] positive threat to the democratic institutions of the Americas." The Soviet Ambassador to Havana expressed USSR support for Castro's five demands, and the Cuban media are still claiming world approval for the demands as condition for settlement of the crisis.

Excelsior, of Mexico City, in noting the unity of the Americas in the face of the crisis and the serious threat of Communism to the Hemisphere, concluded by saying that "only a policy of force can call a halt to the enslaving and expansionist Red plans to the West. The Free World is always victorious when it adopts a strong and decided attitude."

Rio de Janeiro's A Noite, in a front page editorial, declared that "the destruction of the Soviet bases does not mark an end of the problems in the Caribbean."

A labor leader in Venezuela declared that his union would "put special emphasis on the liquidation of the Communist regime in Cuba." And the President of the Federation of Workers Unions of Venezuela, Jose Gonzalez Navarro, declared that the blockade of Cuba should be the beginning of the "overthrow of the Castro regime."

The Centro de Estudios Sociales of Argentina warned in a communique published in Correo de la Tarde: "Russia gave up its military positions but is keeping all its might intact in the ideological warfare.... The Castro regime still is able to continue its ideological penetration campaign and to train guerrillas...."

Panama's La Estrella echoed the Argentine warning and said that "if Fidel Castro remains in [power in] Cuba he will continue to be a certain and positive threat to the democratic institutions of the Americas."

The Bolivian Liberal Party urged rupture of diplomatic relations with Cuba and active Bolivian participation in the blockade as the only "dignified course open...in demonstrating Bolivia's adherence to the democratic principles cherished in the Americas."

CUBA

For the first time since the inception of the crisis the Cuban radio is devoting a sizeable portion of its coverage to subjects not directly related to the crisis. Nevertheless, one Havana commentator stressed that the crisis has not "subsided" and that the U.S. is "seeking new pretexts to humiliate Cuba."

Highlight of a speech last night by the Soviet Ambassador to Cuba indicated continued Soviet support of Cuba and of its "legitimate demands....formulated by Fidel in his five-point communique."

Cuban propaganda output continues to mention reports from Cuba and abroad claiming almost unanimous approval of Castro's five demands, including relinquishment of the Guantanamo Base.

SOVIET UNION

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A succession of Soviet elite statements during the last few days seems to reflect growing Moscow concern over Western--and Chinese--contentions that Soviet policy has suffered a defeat in Cuba. These elite statements also partly represent an attempt to clothe Moscow policies in the proper doctrinal mantle which will enable the Soviets to convince faltering communists that the Cuban crisis was solved in a manner which corresponds to communism's "peaceful coexistence" policy and thus prevented the mass annihilation of humanity.

Elite Reactions

Speaking on the occasion of the October Revolution anniversary, First Deputy Premier Kosygin, in the most defensive statement, said that there could be no question about "who gave in to whom" during the Cuban crisis. "We consider that this was a compromise from both sides, a compromise to common sense and peace." Kosygin also goes further than any other authoritative Soviet spokesman in implying that the Soviet action was based on faith in the reliability of American promises when he says that in the face of these promises "the presence of weapons in Cuba... has lost its purpose."

Suslov, speaking before the Bulgarian party congress, put heavy stress on the worldwide destructiveness of a thermonuclear war which could have grown out over a clash on Cuba. He invoked the 1960 Moscow Declaration (a document frequently used by the Chinese to remind the Soviet Union about its international obligations) to point out that once nuclear bombs start falling it is too late to avoid a war.

This is also the first direct Soviet rebuttal of increasing Chinese charges that Soviet appeasement of the U.S. has sold out Cuba. In it Suslov asserts the USSR is giving various kinds of support to the Cubans. He also insists that this support had never been limited to "declarations."

The first military spokesman to speak publicly about Cuban affairs, Defense Minister Malinovsky during the October Anniversary

festivities, strikes a somewhat firmer note in condemning the U.S. But for once he does not use a formulation usually employed by Soviet military spokesmen to the effect that the slightest provocation from the "imperialist side" will elicit massive retaliation. Malinovsky now says only that retaliation will be forthcoming if the aggressor dares to "start a world war." (In this context it is worthwhile to note that Suslov, as had Voroshilov before him, dusted off Khrushchev's ideological innovation that a world war is no longer inevitable in the present relationship of world forces.)

In this latest spate of elite accommodations to the Cuban crisis, Malinovsky is the only one who singles out Khrushchev for his role in the "preservation of peace."

Support for Cuba

Mass media seem to have stepped up their protestations of general support for the Cuban people and their government. Such a line is featured primarily in broadcasts to Cuba and Latin America. Some of this output represents a marked sensitivity to Western comments about Soviet-Cuban differences and to barely concealed Chinese charges that Soviet selfinterest has almost sold the Cuban revolution down the river.

NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

The strength of the Western defensive bloc and the discord within the Communist bloc were revealed in the Cuban crisis, according to commentators in the non-Arab Middle East and South Asia. UAR media gave wide publicity to Nasser's most recent letter to Khrushchev, praising the latter's "wisdom," "courage," "restraint" and "sincere desire for peace." Editorials in Greece and India criticized Castro's intransigence.

Coverage

In the Near East and South Asia comment continues light as compared with last week. Greek and Indian observers focused on, and were critical of Castro's uncooperativeness. A UAR weekly was of the opinion that neither Kennedy nor Khrushchev won or lost in propaganda terms.

Sino-Soviet Split

"Russia's sudden retreat in Cuba has frustrated China's ambitions," Bombay's Navashakti concluded. Other Indian commentators, too, reasoned that China expected a free hand in India while the Western and Soviet camps were fighting each other in a nuclear war. When the war failed to materialize, China tried to "prove to the Communist world that Russia is sacrificing Cuba to American threats."

Nasser Note to Khrushchev

Cairo widely publicized Nasser's November 5 message to Khrushchev, in which he praised "your wise decision, dictated by a sincere desire for peace," to divert Soviet shipping, respond favorably to U Thant's appeal, and to remove the weapons bases in Cuba. "The Arab people believe in the wisdom of the saying that true courage lies in carrying out the demands of duty."

Cuba Factor

Cairo editorials continued to say that the world still faces another crisis, if not over Cuba, then over some other issue. Tehran's Ettelaat remarked that Cuba is "still a smouldering fire." One Greek paper (Apogeigmatini) believed that a U.S. invasion of Cuba is "inevitable" if Castro refuses to render the bases useless.

An Indian paper (Amrita Bazar Patrika) said, however, that "wise counsel will prevail" on Castro, one reason being that today Cuba enjoys greater security because of the President's undertaking not to invade it. Ettelaat and pro-Government Vrathyni of Athens commented that the Cuban crisis had revealed a weak Soviet Bloc and, in contrast, the solidarity of the West. Yeni Sabah of Istanbul was critical of the minor role played by Britain and France (they did "nothing"), but full of praise for the role played by the UN and its secretary-general.

Two Istanbul papers (Tercuman and Son Havadis) commented on how the Soviets had "deserted" Castro, while Cairo's Rose el Youssef carried anti-Kennedy cartoons.

FAR EAST

News coverage and comment on Cuba continues to dwindle, with Castro's role in the crisis and his status still drawing some attention in Thailand and the Philippines. Japan continues to hope for renewed East-West negotiations on various problems. A typical Japanese assessment of the crisis criticizes both the U.S. and the Soviet Union. One commentator cites U.S. military superiority as decisive. Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia continues to adopt an anti-U.S. posture in regard to Cuba, now claiming that the Soviet Union and Red China would never permit any U.S. action against Cambodia like that against Cuba.

Coverage

Front-page coverage of the photos of dismantled missile sites was provided by the Japanese and Vietnamese press.

Criticism of Castro

Critical comment is focused on Castro's actions and status by Thai and Filipino newspapers. Prachatipatai (Bangkok) posed the question of whether or not Castro would listen to Mikoyan, and went on to opine that Castro "cannot depend on aid from Russia" because "Russia is not willing to risk world war for Castro." Similarly, influential Siam Rath (Bangkok) felt that if the Soviet Union "could persuade Castro to listen to reason or if it can compel him to conform to the agreement reached, there will be no more trouble."

The influential Manila Times viewed Castro's demand for a U.S. pull-out from Guantanamo as an attempt "to save whatever face he still has left among his people." A week previously the Times took the same tack, maintaining that the "hoax of Castro's nationalism" had been exposed to his own people and the citizens of Latin America.

Japanese Divergency

Japanese comment on Cuba remains light and primarily interested in renewed negotiations on other issues of the cold war such as disarmament and a nuclear test ban.

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Nobutane Kiuchi, a prominent Japanese news commentator writing in the Japan Times (English-language, atypical), picks up a theme previously voiced by the conservative Tokyo Shimbun and several military commentators, in his emphasis that "Cuba has been prevented from becoming a Soviet missile base only because the U.S. has so far managed to hold an overwhelming edge over the Russians in military strength."

The more typical Japanese reaction, present in one form or another since the beginning of the crisis, is found in a commentary made by Tatsuo Mitarai over the quasi-governmental Japan Broadcasting System (NHK) on November 4. Mr. Mitarai, a well-known and influential commentator who generally is deemed to be pro-West in his views, held both the U.S. and the Soviets responsible for the threat to world peace and maintained that the U.S. had violated the spirit of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty by its brief forewarning to Premier Ikeda of the steps it was going to take in Cuba. He went on, as so many Japanese editorialists have done during the past two weeks, to attack the U.S. action as a violation of international law, and concluded with the typically ambivalent statement that "it goes without saying that Khrushchev is not good, but the U.S. action is also unjustifiable."

Neutral Variations

The neutral attitude of the Indonesian government and controlled press toward the Cuban situation was restated by General Nasution, Minister for Defense and Security, who was quoted as saying that Indonesia should not become involved in the "current tensions and conflict" between the world's major power blocs.

In contrast, Prince Sihanouk linked the Cuban crisis to Cambodia's border troubles with American allies Thailand and South Viet-Nam, and stated: "I do not think that the Cuban experience, if it were transplanted to Cambodia, would be so easy." He reportedly went on to say that the Soviet Union and Red China would never permit any U.S. action against Cambodia similar to that against Cuba.

COMMUNIST CHINA

The People's Daily editorial today on the Soviet October Revolution is less blunt on Cuba, but still carries forward the same argument on the necessity of struggle rather than surrender.

The Peking party paper reviews the struggles that the young Soviet state had to undergo against "imperialist armed attack and economic blockade" and recalls that the Soviet people "smashed" these attacks only after arduous struggle. The editorial implies that the Soviet Union owes similar support to Cuba, which it describes as "the first socialist state in Latin America."

People's Daily states its own self-interest as well as a Communist duty to assist the Cubans when it declares in an unusual elevation of the status of the Cuban revolution: "Both the Chinese and the Cuban revolutions are a continuation of the October Revolution. They are major hallmarks of the vigorous growth, after the Second World War, of the revolutionary movement of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America."

Peking retains emphasis on its implicit charge (November 5) that the Soviet withdrawal of bases from Cuba was akin to the "Munich" surrender. It reports a similar charge appearing in the Albanian Communist paper Zeri I Popullit. The Albanian paper carried the charge on November 2 and NCNA reports extensively on the article on November 6. On the same day NCNA carries and rebuts various Yugoslav commentaries on the Cuban crisis in such a way as to cast doubt on the Soviet policy involved.

Mass rallies in support of Cuba continue throughout China, with Peking's rally apparently proceeding into its third consecutive day.

AFRICA

Available African comment abates with attention moving to the Himalayas. A few more papers carry photographs of the Soviet missiles in Cuba, and news coverage remains fairly high. The only recent sharply anti-Soviet or pro-American editorials, as largely the case heretofore, come from European-run newspapers. Some papers anticipate Soviet retaliation. There is very scattered recognition of Latin American support for the U.S. position.

Support of U.S. Action

Recently reported examples from European-owned papers in Northern Rhodesia and Kenya show strong support for the U.S. position. The Northern News of Ndola, Northern Rhodesia, on November 5 praised President Kennedy's "tremendous courage" and stated that "what is important is that the Communists have suffered a major setback." The Kenya Weekly News said, "Mr. Khrushchev now knows the strength of America's determination and he has paid a high price for the knowledge." The editorial closed with a quotation from the Spectator of the UK which stated the President had to rebuff the Soviets since "weakness here would encourage Soviet expansion in every area of the world."

Criticism of Soviet Action

A few papers in East Africa as well as Afrique Nouvelle in Dakar criticized Soviet actions. Citing the Soviet record and the duplicity over Cuba, the Kenya Weekly News stated that "a major barrier along the road to enduring peace is that none but a brain-washed coot can trust the word of Russia's present rulers." The regular columnist in Afrique Nouvelle said it was up to Khrushchev to "deactivate" the crisis, adding that the African press and "many Africans" agreed the aggressor in this case was the Soviet Union. A letter to the editor in the Uganda Nation reviewed the record of "Communist imperialism" which "justifies U.S. bases in foreign countries." The letter stated that the aim was to "provoke a crisis in order to mask the Communist invasion of India." Mwafrika na Taifa in Tanganyika printed world press reaction which placed the

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blame for the crisis on Moscow and warned of possible Soviet retaliation elsewhere. The Northern News said that Khrushchev would now want "to regain prestige in other fields" with Berlin "the obvious choice."

Other Reactions

There has been exceptionally sparse recognition in Africa of Latin American support for the U.S. position. However, the Afrique Nouvelle columnist said Moscow had backed down because of "Latin American backing for Kennedy" while the Kenya Weekly News cited the "almost unanimous vote by the OAS" which is a "remarkable change from a year ago."

Late information from Guinea indicates that the government-run radio has given factual news coverage but has not commented, as it seldom does on issues of this type. A columnist in the West African Pilot of Nigeria urged that Africa stay out of world crises. The Daily Graphic in Ghana carried a reprint from the New Statesman critical of the quarantine and citing the Cuba-Turkey "analogy."

WESTERN EUROPE

Comment on the Cuban crisis, declining in volume, focused on the actions and intentions of Castro and Khrushchev. Especially in Italy, warnings were heard that there will be a Cuban problem as long as Castro remains in power. A number of papers in France and Germany continued to speculate that Khrushchev would counter-attack, either in Berlin or the United Nations. A few papers with a neutral bent continued to reflect nervousness by blaming both sides for "brinkmanship" and asserting that both have learned their lesson.

Castro: A Continuing Danger?

The lesser amount of comment on Cuba has focused on the actions and intentions of Castro and Khrushchev. Two leading Italian papers warned that Castro was still a menace. Center Il Messaggero, Rome reminded its readers that Castro has not lost "the capacity to penetrate Latin American countries" and called for a continuing American effort to contain the danger. Corriere della Sera (conservative, Milan) repeated this thought. In Britain, the liberal Guardian, clearly alarmed over the possibility of a renewal of the crisis, warned that "Castro himself is unlikely to derive any benefit from /his refusal of inspection/. Nor, unfortunately, are the rest of us." A dissent from this pessimistic view was registered by Stockholm's conservative Svenska Dagbladet. The paper reasoned that Khrushchev would have less interest in supporting Castro in the future and that the Cuban dictator probably could not "survive the loss of prestige that he has suffered in the eyes of his temperamental and unhappy people."

Khrushchev's Intentions

Despite a Willy Brandt press conference assuring the population that "the Berlin situation is better now than a few weeks ago," the German press continued to display nervousness over possible Soviet moves against Berlin. The pro-socialist Telegraf of that city hoped